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EXPLANATIONS

OF

THE BIBLE

AND OF

THE PRAYER-BOOK:

THE DUTY, AND THE MODE OF PROVIDING THEM.

BEING THE SUBSTANCE OF CHARGES DELIVERED
IN THE YEARS 1857 AND 1858.

BY

RICHARD WHATELY, D.D.
ARCHBISHOP OF DUBLIN.

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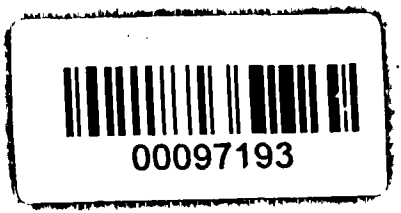

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As the Charges delivered in the years 1857 and 1858 are out of print, or nearly so, it has been thought advisable to publish (with very slight alterations) the substance of them in a single Tract, as they are closely allied in respect of subject-matter.

Palace, Dublin, Nov. 1858.

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EXPLANATIONS

OF

THE BIBLE AND OF THE PRAYER-BOOK.

PART I.

Διήνοιξεν αὐτῶν τὸν νοῦν, τοῦ συνιέναι τὰς γραφάς.
LUKE xxiv. 45.

Twofold call for explanation of Scripture.

THAT solemn question in the Ordination Service, "Are you determined to instruct the people out of the Holy Scriptures?" is one which I trust is never long absent from the mind of any Christian Minister; and yet is one which it can hardly ever be out of place to recall and to dwell on. But it is especially brought before us at the present conjuncture, by the discussions which have been going on for some time past, respecting a proposed revision of our Authorized Version of the Bible.

On that large question, however, I do not design now to enter; but I advert to

it as suggesting two remarks: (1st), that, as our present Version stands, there is need of *explanations* to the People of those passages which are made obscure by the use of obsolete, or nearly obsolete words and phrases, as well as of passages (of which there are not a few) in which there are imperfections in the rendering. Under words "*nearly* obsolete" are to be included not only those seldom in use, but many times more that are as much used as ever, but are obsolete in the sense in which they appear in our Bible-Version and in our Prayer-Book; such as "Publican,"—"Lawyer,"—"prevent,"—"conversation,"—"convenient,"—"lively,"—"passion,"—"incomprehensible,"—and a great many others.* And (2ndly) we should remember that even if a Version should be produced that should be not only altogether perfect, but also admitted by all to be perfect, this would not supersede the necessity of *explanation*. There

* *E. g.*, "Carriage," — "Estate," — "Nephew," — "reasonable,"—and above all, "*shall*." See the Rev. Mr. Booker's useful little book on the obsolete words in our Bible.

are indeed passages which have, now, some obscurity, and which would be rendered perfectly clear by an altered rendering; but many would still need explanation. For, (1st) in any translation of whatever book, it will often be important to point out that some words different in the Original are rendered by the same in our language; and, *vice versâ*, different translations of the same word will often be found. And this it will be desirable to point out to the reader, in order to convey to him more fully the force of the Original.

For instance, when the Apostle Peter, in the conference at Jerusalem [Acts xv.], speaks of God having admitted the Gentiles to equal privileges with the Jews, "purifying [καθαρισας] their hearts by the Faith," it is plain his mind was full of the recollection of the vision in which he had been told "What God hath *cleansed*, that call not thou common." But the force of his expression is greatly weakened to the English reader, by the two words "purify" and "cleanse" being used to render the one in the Original.

And the like takes place in John xv., where καθαιρει is rendered by "purgeth," and καθαρος by "clean." "Elect," again, and "chosen," are translations of the same word; and so are "charity" and "love,"—"Comforter" and "Advocate." And many other instances might be added.

Instances are not less frequent of the converse kind, where two or more different words in the Original are rendered by the same, whether through inadvertency or from necessity; and perplexity or error may be the result, unless an explanation be given. For instance, the two words both rendered "Hell," are, as you are aware, of widely different significations; and the mistaking of one of these for the other (which I have known to take place, for instance, in the Apostles' Creed) has sometimes proved a stumbling-block, and sometimes led to most extravagant fancies. And one of the worst corruptions of Christianity — the converting of the Christian Minister under the Gospel-dispensation into a "sacrificing or Sacerdotal Priest" (answering to the

Levitical)—is fostered by the ambiguity of a word. Throughout our English Bible "Priest" is invariably the rendering of Hiereus, the sacrificing Priest; while in the Prayer-Book the same word invariably answers to Presbyteros (from which indeed it is formed), and which is, in our Bible, always rendered Elder.*

* It has been maintained that since *ἱερευς* is derived from *ἱερος*, sacred (as "sacerdos" from "sacer"), therefore this term may rightly be applied to any one concerned—as a Christian minister is—about *things sacred*. The Apostles, however, appear to have thought otherwise. They must have known what kind of office was, actually, in their Age and country, denoted by the title Hiereus: and if they had designed to establish any such office in the christian Church, or any office that could properly be so called, they would not have carefully abstained,—as they have,—from applying that term to the Elders they ordained. The derivation of the word *ἱερευς* they doubtless well knew; but they were never guilty of the absurdity of taking as the right meaning of a word, not, that which is *actually understood by it*, but, the meaning of the *root* it was derived from. On that principle "*Presbyter*" (as well as the English word "sir," which is contracted from "senior") can only signify "any man advanced in years;" and "*Pontifex*" will bear a sense quite remote from what we have been used to attach to it.

While upon the subject of obscurities from variations in the rendering, I should wish to recommend strongly to the attention of the Biblical student the Rev. William De Burgh's *English-Hebrew Concordance of the Old Testament, and English-Greek Concordance of the*

In the 2nd place, in a book written in a distant Age and country, there will be many allusions to customs and to places, and to events, which were familiarly known even to the unlearned among the original readers, which can only be understood (and that sometimes but imperfectly) by diligent research. For these reasons, then, there must always be, under any circumstances, a need of explanations of Scripture to the people; and, as matters actually stand, a double need.

Design of our Church. § 2. And of our duty in this respect, our Church very dis-

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New Testament. The design of this work is to furnish, together with a *complete* Concordance of the Originals of the Scripture (hitherto a desideratum), a comparison with the Text of the English Translation: exhibiting at one view, not alone every passage in which each Hebrew or Greek word occurs, but the variety of renderings of it in the Authorized Version; and *vice versâ*, by means of a Reverse-Index, the various Hebrew or Greek words rendered by the same English: so as to put the mere English reader in possession of the Originals as regards the true parallelism of Scripture terms, which an English Concordance cannot do; and also providing the Student with the best Lexicons to both,—deducing the meaning of the words of Scripture from the use made of them by the inspired Writers, and thus affording an aid to sound Biblical criticism which it is impossible to over-rate.

tinctly admonishes us, in providing both a Translation of Scripture, which the People are permitted and exhorted to read for themselves, and also an Order of Ministers on whom the duty is solemnly imposed of instructing their people in the Scriptures. If our Church had,—like the unreformed Churches, — put human authority in the place of divine—a pretended infallible Church, on a level with the Written Word—she would, like them, have left the Bible in a dead language, kept, like the Jewish Holy of Holies, to be occasionally visited by a High Priest only. And had she, on the other hand, designed (as seems to be sometimes taken for granted by our opponents) that every man should, unaided, make out a system of religion for himself by the simple perusal of a translation of the Bible, she would have left the people with that, and have provided *no* Order of men to instruct them.

The imputation which, as I have just said, is sometimes cast on us, of leaving the unlearned Christian to make out, each for himself, such a religion as he

can, from his own unaided study of Scripture, has been perhaps encouraged by the careless language of some Protestants when contending for the right, and the duty, of private judgment. But that such an interpretation even of the most incautious expressions is quite unwarrantable, is proved by the *practice* of Protestants of all denominations; all of whom, without, I believe, any exception, make use of some expositions of Scripture, whether called commentaries, notes, sermons, or dissertations. And even independently of these, every *Translation* is manifestly an aid furnished by the learned to the unlearned. Nay, even an *Editor* is to a certain extent a Commentator; since (to say nothing of his choice among different readings) his *punctuation*,—on which the sense of a passage will sometimes very much depend,—is an expression of his opinion as to the true meaning. To take one instance out of many, as a specimen; it depends entirely on the punctuation of a passage in 1 Tim. iii. whether we regard the Apostle as teaching that "the Church," or, that

the "Mystery of Godliness," is "a pillar and ground of the truth."

It is evidently most irrational to confound together (as some are accustomed to do, either from indistinctness of thought, or from sophistical design) two things so manifestly different as the employment of human *help* in any study, and the acceptance of any doctrine on the *authority* of the Teacher. The distinction is perfectly well understood and universally recognized, in all other departments. The student, for instance, of Mathematics, or any branch of physical science, is always glad to resort to the aid of a competent instructor; and yet he would be considered as having studied in vain, if he were to receive scientific truths on his instructor's word. The office of the Professor or Tutor is, not, to be a substitute for the demonstration of those truths, but, to teach the Student to demonstrate them himself. And so also the Christian Minister must not presume to "teach as one having authority," like the Lord Jesus, whose miracles were his credentials from Heaven. He must not

make himself, or his Church, a substitute for Scripture, or require his interpretations of it to be received on his word, but lead his people to an intelligent and profitable study of the Scriptures for themselves.

Elementary instruction, and Exposition.

§ 3. The instruction in Gospel-truth which it is the office of a Church and of its Ministers to afford, may be considered as falling under two heads: (1st) Elementary *systematic* teaching of the doctrines derived from Scripture, and (2ndly) what is more strictly called *explanation* or exposition of the Sacred Writings themselves. On the one side will be ranged Catechisms, and also Creeds (otherwise called "Articles" or "Confessions"), as well as many of the Discourses (whether under the title of Sermons, Tracts, or any other) that from time to time have been composed; and on the other side, Translations, Paraphrases, Notes, and every kind of Commentary (of which kind are many Discourses also) having in view the elucidation of the original Works of the inspired Writers.

On the one side we have the precious ore brought to us, which has been extracted (or professes to have been extracted) from the mine; on the other, we are provided with instruments for digging in the mine ourselves.

The distinction I have laid down, though of course well known to you, is one which it is useful to bring frequently and strongly before the mind, because neither branch of instruction should be omitted, and it is important to guard against confounding the one with the other.

It is well known that every one of the books of the New Testament was addressed to persons who were already Christians, that they "might know the certainty of those things wherein they had been instructed" [catechized]. No elementary introduction to the knowledge of Christianity — nothing of the character of a Catechism, Creed, or Liturgy, is to be found in the Sacred Writings; though it is manifest that something of the kind—either oral or written —must have been in use from the very

first. And the omission of every such composition in our Scriptures—an omission which certainly would not have been found had the Writers been left to themselves,—I took occasion, long since, to point out as a strong proof of their having been under superhuman influence.* But the omission is one which it is evident the uninspired Church was designed to supply. The Church's office is *to teach;* that of the Scriptures, to prove.† In compositions of this character, we call in Scripture as a witness and as a judge; collecting and collating the various passages which establish the Articles of our Faith.

But it was not designed that any human compositions, however interwoven with passages of Scripture, should supersede the perusal of the Scriptures themselves. We must not be content to employ Scripture as a mere commentary on a human work, but encourage and aid a careful and profitable study of the Sacred Volume itself. For, after all, the Evan-

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* *Essay on the Omission of Creeds,* &c.
† See HAWKINS *on Tradition.*

gelists and Apostles, if the reader is but made thoroughly to understand their writings, will preach the Gospel more effectually than any of us can.

There is, as we well know, an objection to this study, in the unreformed Churches, on the ground that there are in Scripture "things hard to be understood which the unlearned wrest to their own destruction." And to prevent this, they discourage the study of Scripture by the Mass of the People, and seek to keep it in the hands of their appointed guides. And this might be a reasonable procedure, if (1st) we did not find that the Sacred Writers evidently did address themselves to mankind at large, and if (2ndly) there were infallibility conferred on those who take upon them to prescribe "what every Christian ought to know and do." But as it is, the result must be—and has manifestly been—that the supposed wise and learned have become unwise and unlearned, "teaching for doctrines the commandments of men" (there being no one to detect their deficiencies and errors), and in short, "blind leaders of the blind."

Some explanations may be verified out of the English Bible.

§ 4. The best safeguard, then, that it is possible for us to supply (and what was manifestly designed to be supplied) against the danger of men's "wresting the Scriptures to their own destruction," is to afford them such instruction as may save them from being thus "unlearned and unstable."

And of the explanations which are needed, with this view, and in the absence of which perplexity or error may arise, there are not a few which, when given, even the English reader may be brought easily to verify for himself. For instance, it may sometimes appear strange to the readers of the first three Gospels to find Jesus summoning disciples to follow Him, and proclaiming Himself as having "the Spirit of the Lord upon Him," without any mention being made of any *previous* miraculous sign having been publicly displayed to justify his pretensions. But when you explain that such display had been made from the first, and was left unmentioned by those Evangelists because they were addressing readers al-

ready familiar with that portion of the history, you may refer to the opening of John's Gospel, written, as is reported, and as seems very evident, in part, to supply some of those omissions. And in that is recorded the commencement of Christ's ministry, in his being joined by some of John the Baptist's disciples on their Master's testimony to the miraculous sign at his baptism, and in the "beginning of miracles" at Cana, on the evidence of which "manifestation of his glory," those "disciples believed on Him."

Again, many a reader is perhaps somewhat startled at the condemnation of the guest (at the Wedding Feast in the parable) for not having on a wedding-garment. This would have been, according to *our* customs, unreasonable, when the guests were poor men invited from the highways. But when you explain this by reference to the Oriental custom of providing, on great occasions, garments for the guests at a feast of especial solemnity, you may refer the reader to the passage (in 2 Kings x.)

where Jehu, on the occasion of giving a great feast to the worshippers in the Temple of Baal, directs that they shall be supplied with "vestments." His object evidently was, to *mark* them for the slaughter he meditated; but it is manifest he could not have been doing anything unheard of before, or unusual; else, it would have excited suspicion and alarm. The reader of the parable will then readily perceive that the wedding-garment represents that righteousness of Christ which *He* graciously provides for his invited guests, but which *they* are required to put on, and themselves *wear*, on pain of being "cast into the outer darkness."

Again, the want of coincidence, in English, between the words "Christ" and "Anointed," sometimes causes an indistinctness which may be removed by an explanation easily verified by the English reader. *E. g.*, in Acts iv. we find the Apostles alluding to the 2nd Psalm; "the rulers were gathered together against the Lord, and against his *Christ* . . . . . for

of a truth against thy Holy Child Jesus whom Thou hast *anointed* . . . . . they were gathered together." Now here the reader may be referred to the Psalm as it stands in our Versions, where he will read "against the Lord, and against his Anointed."

Again, the English reader of Heb. ix. 15 is likely to have before his mind the idea, not of a *Covenant* ratified by the blood of a victim, but of a Testament in the sense of a *Will* by which any one disposes of his property after his death. For, this latter is a thing familiar to *us*, though to the Hebrews unknown; while, on the contrary, the connexion between a Covenant and a *death*,—the death of a slain sacrifice,—which was familiar to *them*, is quite foreign from *our* customs. And accordingly a *Will* seems to have been what our Translators themselves were thinking of. Yet the right explanation of the passage may be confirmed even by an appeal to our own Bible-Version itself. For, in the very passage cited from the Book of Exodus—"This is

the blood of the Testament which God hath enjoined"—the word *Covenant* is the one employed in the translation of the Book of Exodus itself. [Exod. xxiv. 8.] And the reader accordingly is to be admonished that wherever the word "Testament" occurs in our Version, he is always to understand "Covenant."

It certainly is to be regretted that the word Covenant was not retained throughout; which would have added much to the clearness and the force of many passages; especially that in which the Lord Jesus at the last Supper makes a manifest reference to the sacrificial character of his death, in saying, "this is the new Covenant in my blood;" clearly alluding to the words of Moses, "behold the blood of the Covenant," &c. And no doubt there is an actual mistranslation of the words επι νεκροις, which cannot possibly mean "when men are dead," but "over dead bodies," viz.: of the slain victims, when parties had "made a covenant with sacrifice."*

* See a very useful little work on the Authorized Version, by the Rev. H. Hall, lately published.

Explanations derived from other sources.

§ 5. On this point indeed (as in any case of alleged mistranslation) your explanation cannot be verified by the hearers from their own knowledge. You can only refer them to the judgment of any one who has a competent knowledge of the language of the Original.

So also there will often be matters needing some explanation, of points connected with history, geography, or ancient Oriental customs, when your explanations cannot be at once confirmed by the Bible itself, but on which the unlearned reader may be referred to many accessible and well-known popular books, or to any one who has read them. *E.g.*, the mere English reader, accustomed to our mode of building, may be perplexed by the warning respecting a hasty flight, "let him that is on the house-top not come down to take anything out of the house." But the perplexity may easily be cleared up, by a description (for which you may refer both to ancient and modern books) of the flat-roofed houses of the Eastern cities, and the thoroughfare along

the house-tops, by which a person might escape from the city without once coming down.

Again, a reader of 1 Kings xviii. might be at a loss to understand Elijah's command (when he had built an altar and prepared a sacrifice) to pour numerous barrels of water over the pile, and the ready fulfilment of his directions, at a time when the land had long been so parched with drought that water was become a very scarce and precious article. But the close vicinity of Mount Carmel to the *sea* affords a ready explanation, which may be confirmed by the view of many ordinary maps.

Let no one presume to say that such points as these (of which, as you must be aware, very many might be enumerated) are trifles not worth explaining, and that it is of no consequence (since they do not involve essential articles of the christian faith) whether, on such points, the People have correct notions or incorrect, or none at all.* One who has a due reverence for

* "Is it any great harm if a word be misunderstood?" says a writer of the *Tracts for the Times*, No. 3.

the Scriptures will reckon nothing unimportant that can tend to put the reader *at home*—if I may so speak—in the Sacred Writings, so as to study them with interest and with intelligence. The question is not whether a correct knowledge of such and such points be essential to salvation; but whether *we* shall have done our duty if we fail to throw any light upon Scripture which it is in our power to afford. What portions of useful instruction may the most safely be omitted, is an idle inquiry, except when an *alternative* is presented to us;—when (from want of time, or some other cause) we are *precluded* from giving *all* the instruction that is needed.

Dread felt of references to the Original.

§ 6. When, however, there is any question about an altered rendering of the Original, in those few places (and they are but few) in which an important difference in the sense is involved, you will perhaps, if you venture to make any reference to the Original, be met by sneers at a pedantic display of Greek-

learning. And it is remarkable that you will often hear this kind of taunt from persons who have no scruple at all of *expounding* Scripture,—asserting boldly that this or that passage in our English Version must mean so and so; a signification perhaps different from what the words at the first glance would seem to convey; and drawing inferences—sometimes very bold ones,—from the words before them. But any reference at all to the *Original*, these persons will decry as presumptuous and pedantic.

Pedantry is, of course, a fault to be avoided; and that not in one department only, but in all. And "no Art," says Bacon, "can teach the timely and suitable application of the Art." But an exemption from pedantry would be too dearly purchased by a rejection of learning, or a resolution to make no use of it, for fear of its abuse. I would recommend then, not only a general study of the Original Scriptures, but a perusal in the Original of each chapter that you are about to read in Church, and especially, of any text you are about to preach from;

with an especial care never to presume to apply any such text in any sense (however true and useful) different from what the Sacred Writer designed in that very passage.

But you will be met perhaps by an outcry against the danger of unsettling men's minds, by allowing them to know that the Scriptures were not originally written in our own language, and that accordingly, what we commonly call the Bible is a translation of the Bible, or that our Translators claimed no infallibility, or that what is called the Authorized Version is not (like the Vulgate, to the Church of Rome) the standard and rule of Faith to which our Articles refer; or that there ever existed any difference of opinion among Scholars as to the true reading or true sense of any passage in the Original.*

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* That I may not be thought to be combating a shadow, I subjoin an extract from the evidence given some years ago before a Parliamentary Committee on Education. "I should object in general to any version "different from our own, without inquiring into the "question whether it was faithfully translated or not, "because I conceive that when you give the Scriptures "to a child you present him with the Word of God, and

Nay, you may even meet with persons who will deprecate your explaining to People that the divisions into chapters, and into verses, were not the work of the original Writers themselves, but were in-

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"you should tell him that you are presenting him with an "infallible guide; and that anything that shakes his "opinion in that guide, so far mars the purposes for "which you have given the Book, and I cannot conceive "anything to do that more effectually than a diversity of "translation of the Scriptures."—[*Lords*, p. 582.]

Mr. Wyse.] "Are you aware that the version of the "Psalms used in the Church Service is very different "from that to be found in the Authorized Version? "[*Ans.*] I am.—Do you not think the child who hears "them recited in the church, and afterwards reads them "in the Authorized Version in school, will naturally "notice this difference of version? [*Ans.*] I do not "think there is one child in a thousand who knows of "the existence of the difference, or ever has read the "Authorized Version in the Bible; they read it in the "Prayer-Book. I am ready to go further, and say, I "am very sorry there are two versions; I am very sorry "that one was not altered at the time the Gospels and "the Epistles were; but I do not see why, because there "is this difference, that you should extend it.—Should "this difference be perceived by the child, do you think "any injury would arise from it? [*Ans.*] I should "think that a very troublesome question to answer to "any child.—So that it is a matter of contingency only, "depending upon the capacity of the child, his acuteness "and opportunities, whether his mind may not be injured "by this difference of version? [*Ans.*] I think it can "be explained to the child; but the fewer points of that "kind there are to be explained to the child, I think so "much the better."—[*Commons*, 2248. 2251.]

troduced long after, for the convenience of reference. That the mistake exists among many of the unlearned, I have actually known given as a reason, "not for correcting that mistake, but for leaving them under this error, for fear of unsettling their minds!

No one need wonder if an objection, on the same ground, and from the same persons, should be raised against the correction of a typographical error. Most of you probably are aware that in the passage about "straining at a gnat," the word "at" is a misprint for "out." And this error, which was corrected in an edition of the Bible printed about the middle of the last century, was afterwards restored, and appears in the modern editions. We may perhaps be told that it would unsettle men's minds to correct it.

This kind of dread of unsettling, conduced very much, no doubt, to the retaining of the Scriptures in a dead language, in the Romish and Greek Churches. For, there never was a religious scruple against translating Scripture from the Original tongues, as there is, in reference

to the Koran, among Mussulmans. On the contrary, the Latin Version in the Romish Church, and the Old-Sclavonic used in the Russian, (neither of which are now understood by the people,) were Translations made by those Churches into the (then) vernacular languages, on purpose that the Sacred Books might be accessible to the unlearned. And it was by small and imperceptible steps that those languages became gradually changed into those now spoken.

Danger of exciting deserved distrust.

§ 7. But nothing tends so much, in the end, to unsettle men's minds as their discovering (which they are almost sure to do, sooner or later) that, in some point, they have been kept in darkness, or misled, by their appointed guides. For, "suspicions," says Bacon, "like bats, always fly by twilight." When once men have come to learn that what has been called "Reserve," or "Economy," or "Phenakism," has been practised on them—that some truth has been concealed from them, or some error encouraged,

—they will then be very likely to doubt *how much;* and to feel no confidence even in what does admit of being well-established. When they find that our Authorized Version did not exist at the time when the Articles were framed which make Scripture the Rule of Faith, and that two different Versions are in actual present use in our Church, and that our Translators not only claimed no infallibility, but in several instances even proclaim their doubt as to the right rendering, by giving *two*,—one in the Text, and the other in the Margin;—if the result of these and other such discoveries should be a general distrust of our teaching, and perhaps ultimately a disbelief of Christianity altogether, for this we shall be chiefly responsible. Members of the Romish Church who sincerely believe, on the authority of their Church, that the Latin Vulgate is a perfectly correct and infallible Version—a belief for which we think there is no good ground, and for which *they* are often reproached—may retort on some of those who censure them, that at least

they are guilty of no inconsistency, and of no deceit, since they do not adhere to a Version which they *know* to be not perfectly correct, nor endeavour to persuade their people that it is so, while secretly convinced of the contrary.

The ultimate inexpediency, however, of all timorous suppression of truth, or connivance at error,—all departure from the simple, frank, straight-forward, open course,—is what it is seldom *given* to any one to discover, till too late, unless he is a sincere votary of truth for its own sake, and shuns all indirect procedure, not from calculation of consequences, but on principle. And such a man will deprecate concealment and disguise *universally*, and not merely when the truths suppressed are those which he is especially anxious to inculcate, and when the errors connived at are such as he is particularly opposed to.

This is evident. But you may meet with some who reprobate the system of "Reserve" as practised by those who *avow and defend* it, yet are—quite unconsciously—giving countenance to what

amounts very nearly to the same thing. The learned *have* access to various Versions of Scripture, and to the Original, and to various editions of the Original, containing in some instances different readings; and to numerous books which throw light on many passages of Scripture. Now if all the knowledge that is to be derived from these sources, is to be studiously kept back from the Mass of the People, as something which they had better be without, this surely is something very like the system of "Reserve" or "Double-doctrine." It implies that there is to be one Religion for the initiated, and another for the Mass; who are not only not to be *required* to know what they may not perhaps have leisure or inclination to learn, but, to be *prohibited* from access to knowledge which they are able and willing to acquire.

Disparagement of Reason & of Knowledge.

§ 8. But perhaps you may be met by florid declamations on the insufficiency of *mere* knowledge for the formation of the christian character, and against

trusting to Reason *alone*, without any impression being made on the feelings, or any application of what is learnt, to the conduct. The sophistical insertion of some single word, such as "mere" or "alone," serves often to give currency to a kind of fallacy* so gross that it is wonderful it should be so often employed, and so often with success. No one, in providing his ship with a Rudder and a Compass, is understood to mean that these will *alone* bring the Vessel into the right Harbour, without sails or oars, or other motive power. But shall we then throw aside the Rudder and Compass, and spreading the sails to the wind, leave the vessel to be driven about as chance shall direct?

If a handful of wild fanatics believe that a certain brother of theirs is an incarnation of the Deity, on what ground do we reject him as a blasphemous impostor? Jesus of Nazareth made that claim; and He was so rejected. There is

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* "Irrelevant conclusion," otherwise called "Ignoratio Elenchi,"

no difference between the two cases, except evidence and want of evidence. "If I had not done among them," said our Lord, "the *works* that none other man did, they had not had sin." Why should any one believe in Jesus, yet refuse to acknowledge Mahomet? or that insane woman who, some years back, pretended to be a prophetess, and made her deluded followers believe that she would rise from the dead? or those pretended prophets who have led so many thousands of disciples to their new settlement in America? No answer can be given, except that which our Lord gave, "if I do not the works of my Father, believe me not; the works that I do in my Father's name, they bear witness of me:" . . . . "I am come in my Father's name (*i.e.*, displaying his power), and ye receive me not; if another shall come in his own name (*i.e.*, requiring to be trusted on his own word), him ye will receive." Now this is manifestly an appeal to our Reason. As for feelings of religious veneration, no one can doubt that the followers of Mahomet, and of other false

prophets, were strongly under the influence of such feelings. But they believed, and felt confidence, unreasonably, in those who displayed no credentials from Heaven —no "demonstration of the Spirit and of Power."

Disparagement of Miraculous Evidence.

§ 9. Of late years, however, there have appeared some who, professing to be Christians, deny or attempt to explain away all the christian miracles; or at least endeavour to disparage all miraculous evidence,—and indeed all evidence whatever,—of the Gospel, except the feeling of its suitableness to our wants and wishes, and to our moral judgment. They are for deciding on the truth or falsity of any system, and accepting or rejecting it, entirely without any reference to external signs, and merely from its conformity or non-conformity to our notions of what is right and good and needful.

Now it is precisely on this ground that the majority of the Jewish nation rejected Jesus. The reality of his miracles they

admitted; but they said, "this man cannot be of God, because he keepeth not the Sabbath day." The religion and the morality which He taught were quite foreign from all their notions: and a "kingdom not of this world" was quite contrary to their expectations and wishes. They looked—as their descendants do at this day—for a kingdom of great earthly splendour and power, and a Christ who should be a mighty conqueror, exalting their nation above all Gentiles. And hence it was that when Jesus "came unto his own, his own received Him not."

But perhaps you will be told that these men ought to have had higher and purer moral principles, and then they would have been struck with the sublimity and purity of the Gospel of Christ. But whence were they to derive this moral improvement which they needed, but from the very lessons of Jesus Himself? And this is precisely the process that did take place with his disciples. They became so, on the evidence of his mighty works; and though originally

infected with much of the worldliness and narrow-mindedness of the rest, they gradually and slowly learned from their Master to correct and elevate their moral views; and *then* they arrived at that just appreciation of his doctrines, and suitable admiration of them, which was not the original *foundation* of their faith, but the *reward* of it.

Real results of right instruction.

§ 10. If, then, we would be indeed followers of Christ and his Apostles, and would lead our people to be so, we must address them as rational Beings; not, indeed, reckoning mere intellectual culture (which the Apostles did not) as the sole, or the chief, or the ultimate object, but as an indispensable means towards our end, if that end is to be, well-directed piety, and not any wild and perhaps noxious superstition.

And you may be assured that sound and judicious instruction—leading men to be "in malice indeed, children, but in understanding, men"—will be so far from unsettling their minds, that it will even

have the opposite effect, by showing that you are not seeking to deceive them, or to keep them in the dark, but are justly entitled to their confidence.

This will hold good, even when you find occasion to allude to different Versions, or to different readings; or even to give a different rendering of some passage from that of our English Bible. For, in fact, one of the most satisfactory proofs within the reach of the unlearned, of Scripture-truth, is, that all different editions, and different Versions, by independent and even rival Translators, agree in setting forth all the main facts and main doctrines of Christianity; thus doing away all suspicion that men are required to trust implicitly to the honesty of the learned, and that these may have formed a *conspiracy* to delude them. And when you admit (what else would be found out in time, were you to deny it) that our Translators were fallible men, claiming no inspiration,—and when you notice, in those very few places where it is needful, the mistakes of our Authorized Version,—you will be the more

readily believed, in saying—as you may with perfect truth,—that it is on the whole an admirable translation, and sets forth all the essential truths of the Gospel.

Proposed revision of the Authorized Version.

§ 11. As for the questions respecting a change, or a revision, of our Authorized Version, I shall not—as I said at the beginning—enter into a discussion of them. But I will take this occasion of remarking that I see insuperable objections to anything that could with propriety be called a NEW VERSION. Any one, indeed, who delights in special-pleading subtleties may perhaps chuse to insist that the alteration of a single word constitutes a *new* version; or, on the other hand, he may contend that great and important changes in nearly half the words in the book, constitute merely a revised and *corrected* version. But speaking in conformity to ordinary usage, I would say that it would be undesirable to have the language of our Version modernized, except in those few instances

where the partial obsoleteness (already alluded to) of certain words, causes obscurity, or mistake as to the sense. And I should be sorry to see any changes made respecting which there could be differences of opinion among persons entitled to respect. But some points there are, on which it seems impossible that any doubt could (in the present day) exist, and in which accordingly changes might be introduced without offending or alarming any reasonable person;—changes very small indeed in amount and in absolute magnitude, but not of small advantage.

To take one instance as an example; in the passage in 1 Tim. vi. 5, where "gain" is spoken of as taken for "godliness," the mere transposition of those words would make the passage sense, which at present is utterly unintelligible. It seems not unlikely that the present rendering may have arisen originally from a clerical error, or a misprint. But at any rate it may safely be assumed that there is, now, no scholar in existence who can doubt what is the meaning, and the only

possible meaning, of the Apostle's words; —that he is speaking of men who regarded the profession of Christianity as a source of emolument.

In such a case as this, and also in some others, in which the omission or insertion of the *Article* is what all would allow (at the present day) to be an error, and where the sense is thus marred, as in putting "many" for "*the* many," the text should at once be boldly set right. In several other instances where *nearly* all would agree that either a wrong reading has been followed,* or a mis-translation given, the correction might be inserted in the Margin, so as to leave each reader his choice.

And here I would observe, by the way, that no copy should ever appear (as is too often the practice) without the *marginal readings*. These are, in fact, a part of the Work of our Translators; so that the omission of them in any volume pro-

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* As, for instance, in Acts xi. 20, where the persons spoken of were evidently not "the Grecians" but "the Greeks."

fessing to be the Authorized Version, amounts to a falsification.

It would also be an improvement which, I conceive, no one could object to, that the words supplied by the Translators should no longer be in *Italics*—the sign, in all other books, of the *emphatic* words —but, according to the usual practice in other books, within [square] brackets.

The division also of the Text into paragraphs with reference to the sense, marking the chapters and verses in the Margin only, would help to guard the reader against the mistakes I lately noticed. And this mode of printing was adopted in an edition of the Bible by the well-known Bishop Wilson of Sodor and Man; and is to be found in the best editions (as you are doubtless aware) of the Greek Testament.*

* The running-titles also, which have often been altered from time to time without any authority, and which are sometimes such as rather to mislead than to aid the reader, should be carefully revised. I have known, *e.g.*, the word "Deacon" mentioned in a Theological Dictionary as occurring in Acts vi., though the word never once occurs throughout the whole book! But the writer had evidently been misled by the running-titles and headings of chapters.

Temptation to neglect explanatory teaching.

§ 12. But whether such a revision as I have alluded to shall ever take place, or any different one, or none at all, our duty must still be, to supply our People with such explanations of the Sacred Books, as must, *in any case*, be needed.

I have dwelt thus earnestly on this branch of our duty, not, of course, as meaning to disparage the others, but because there is, to some persons, a strong temptation to neglect it. Those who have (or believe themselves to have) the gift of pouring forth hortatory addresses in a style of impassioned and stirring eloquence, will be tempted to confine themselves too much to the exercise of that gift, and to be occupied almost exclusively in what they call appëals to the heart. The effects produced by such addresses are often immediate and striking, though seldom lasting, unless when preceded or accompanied by what is more properly called instruction;—unless the metal that is heated be moulded into the proper form.

But such persons as I have alluded to are under a temptation to shun the less showy and more troublesome task of patiently labouring, day after day, and year after year, first to acquire themselves, and then to impart to a congregation of whom many perhaps are dull-minded and little educated, those rudiments of knowledge which are needed for a profitable study of the Scriptures.

And again, the hearers will usually admire more, and be more gratified by, a style of exciting eloquence, than by discourses of which *explanation* forms the chief part. For, to *learn* requires attention and some degree of laborious exercise of the mind; which is often distasteful, to those especially who have been little accustomed to study. But *excitement*, on the other hand, implies no *labour;* the hearer derives often much gratification from the stirring up of his feelings, but is altogether passive as far as regards mental *exertion*.

What style of preaching therefore will usually be the most agreeable to a large portion of mankind, and the

most admired by them, is sufficiently obvious.

I am not, however, considering such a case as that of a man deliberately preferring popularity to the real edification of his flock, and to the faithful service of his Divine Master. If such a person could exist, he would evidently be beyond the reach of admonition. But if any one feels confident that he is quite safe from all danger of having his judgment biassed in favour of what is most liked and most applauded by those around, or of being tempted to over-rate the importance and utility of that which he finds the easiest to himself, and in which he most excels,—if he feels quite secure against all danger of any such temptation, I should then say that he is in the greatest danger. For, our real safety depends on vigilant self-distrust.

Pains and skill requisite for exposition.

§ 13. But any one, who does but labour patiently and skilfully to impart,—"line upon line, and precept upon precept; here a little, and there a little,"—

such instruction as is needed, will have the gratification, after a time, of finding that even those of no superior abilities, and of very imperfect education, can be brought to understand a great deal more than persons who have not fairly tried the experiment would think possible; and to take an interest in matters to which many would expect to find them hopelessly indifferent. Multitudes of persons of very humble station have been brought (as I can testify from my own knowledge) to read, with lively interest, and with intelligence, books which many a one would formerly have pronounced, from antecedent conjecture, to be wholly beyond their reach.

I have spoken of the necessity of *skill* as well as patience, because the art of affording explanatory instruction, requires (like all other arts) a skill which cannot be acquired without diligent practice. Any one who should imagine himself qualified to teach whatever he does but himself know, would be as much in error as if he should undertake to practise as a Physician from a mere book-knowledge of anatomy and pharmacy, without having

ever attended a sick bed, or felt a patient's pulse. We need a knowledge not only of the *things* to be taught, but of the *persons* to whom they are to be taught; —not only of the qualities of the Medicine, but of the constitution of the patient. And a mere *general* knowledge of Human Nature is not sufficient. We should understand also the peculiar habits of thought and mental constitution of whatever class of persons we are to instruct; —whether children, or adults,—the gentry, or the mechanics,—seafaring men, or husbandmen, &c.*

With that Class, whatever it may be, we must *converse* much; not merely talking to them, but *listening* to them, so as to become nearly as familiar as themselves with their ideas, and to be able to draw our illustrations from things with which they are the most conversant. If any one should tell you of a person who had supplied with useful instruction—whether

* In Missionary-work it has been found that those have been most successful who have confined their attention almost entirely, each to a particular class of unbelievers; one to the Mahometans, another to the Brahminists, another to the Parsees; &c.

orally, or in treatises for popular use,—the humbler classes of society, *without having ever had much personal intercourse with them*, you may at once conclude either that he does not really mean what his words express, or else that he is an utterly incompetent judge of the whole matter.

Presumptuous explanations to be shunned.

§ 14. I will advert, in conclusion, to one caution in reference to explanations; a caution which has been sometimes grievously neglected. We must not attempt explanations of divine mysteries which are unrevealed, or partially and dimly revealed, in Scripture. Very acceptable indeed, to some hearers, are bold interpretations of unfulfilled Prophecies—of Prophecies which *would* have been made quite clear at once, had the Almighty so willed—and speculations on the divine decrees which (as our Article expresses it) are "secret to us." But of matters beyond human reason, we should seek diligently to know as much, and be *content* to know *only* as much, as the All-

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Wise has thought fit to disclose to us. As was most justly observed by Scaliger,

> "Nescire velle quæ Magister optimus
> Docere non vult, erudita inscitia est."

And you should not listen to any one who attempts to explain the nature of the Most High as He is in Himself, and why, and how, the sufferings of Christ were necessary for Man's salvation, and why evil exists in the universe, and other mysterious points which are beyond human Reason, and which Scripture does not reveal.

And equally to blame are both those who profess to explain, where God has not given us revelation, the reasons of his dealings with Man, and those again who insist on it that in such and such a case He *had* no reason at all, but acted as He did "to declare his sovereignty," and "for his own glory;" as if He could literally desire glory! When the Most High has merely revealed to us his Will, we have no right to pronounce that He *had* no reasons for it except his will, because He has not made them known to us. Even an earthly king, who is not responsible to any of his subjects for the reasons of his commands, may think fit

sometimes to issue commands without explaining his reasons: and it would be very rash for any one to conclude that he had *no* reason at all, but acted from mere caprice.

So also, a dutiful child will often have to say, "I do so and so because my parents have commanded me; that is reason enough for me." But though this is—to the child—a very good reason for *obeying* the command, it would be a very bad reason with the *parents* for *giving* that command. And he would show his filial veneration and trust, not, by taking for granted that his parents *had* no reason for their commands, but, on the contrary, by taking for granted that there *was* a good reason both for acting as they did, and for not giving him any explanation.

It is therefore no pious humility, but, on the contrary, great presumption, for Man to pronounce—where Scripture does not tell us—either what were the reasons of God's dealings with us, or that He had none at all. One who pretends to be so much wiser, or better informed, than the Apostles and Prophets, as to tell us what they knew not, or at least were not com-

missioned to make known, must greatly over-rate the faculties of Man.

Yet some, it is remarkable, who are rather neglectful of the duty of explaining many things that do admit of clear explanation,—much of the meaning of the Sacred Writers in passages that were in their days perfectly intelligible to the unlearned among their hearers—these same persons are ready to give theoretical explanations of points which were *not* revealed to the Apostles and Prophets, or at least which they were not commissioned to make known to *us*. When the illumination from Heaven—the rays of Revelation—fail to shed such full light as they wish for, on Gospel-mysteries, these speculators bring to the dial-plate the lamp of human philosophy, to cast the shadow whichever way they will.

But it is not faith, but want of faith, that refuses to believe what we cannot explain to our own satisfaction. It is not humble piety, but profane presumption, that pretends to know and to teach what was concealed from the Inspired Writers, or at least—under divine guidance—concealed *by* them.

And besides the presumptuousness of such a proceeding, it is likely to present a stumblingblock to the thoughtless; leading them, when they perceive, as they usually will, that the pretended explanations of certain doctrines are utterly futile, to reject the doctrines themselves along with the unsound theory that has overlaid them.

Be diligent and careful then,—I would say to the christian Minister,—in giving such instruction to your People as may enable them to understand what is set forth for their use in the Scriptures, but not what is omitted there. Enough and more than enough is there taught to "make us wise unto salvation," if we do but take pains to learn it, and practically to apply it. Hereafter, in a better World, more will doubtless be revealed. We shall no longer "see as now, by means of a mirror, darkly, but face to face, and know even as also we are known." For if in this life we "purify ourselves even as He, our Divine Master, is pure, we know that when He shall appear we shall be like Him; for we shall see Him as He is."

PART II.

Προσεύξομαι τῷ πνεύματι, προσεύξομαι δὲ καὶ τῷ νοΐ.
1 Cor. xv. 14.

Duty of giving religious instruction.

I HAVE many times called your attention to the duty of giving religious *instruction* to the People; not as imputing to you any negligence in that point, but because it is not only the most important (all would, I suppose, admit it to be *one* of the most important) of our duties, but what may be said to *characterize* our office, as established by the Apostles, and maintained in our Church, and as distinguished from the office of the *sacerdotal* priest under the Levitical law, and of the priest in the unreformed churches, whose chief function is, not so much instruction, as the offering of a supposed sacrifice on behalf of the People, and the administering of (supposed) sacraments.* In our Church, indeed, as

* See Note A at the end.

in almost all others, the administration of the Sacraments is generally committed (very naturally and properly) to the Clergy. It is a thing evidently suitable that a christian Minister should take the lead in the public worship, and especially in the most solemn portion of it, the celebration of the Sacraments. But it is remarkable that all the Apostle Paul says in his Epistles to Timothy and to Titus of the duties of christian ministers (which is not a little), has reference to the instruction of the People, and contains no allusion to the administration of the Sacraments. And this certainly does seem to indicate at least what *he* considered as the most *essential* portion of their office.

Explanations of the Prayer-Book.

§ 2. And what I have above said concerning explanations of the Scriptures, will equally apply to explanations of the Prayer-Book. As the benefit of Scripture is so far diminished in proportion as parts of it are indistinctly or erroneously understood, so the benefit of our Church-

Services is impaired to those who do not "pray with the spirit, and pray with the understanding also." And it would be a mistake to conclude that no elucidations of anything in the Prayer-Book are needed except for persons who come forward with objections, or with complaints of perplexity. On the contrary, very great familiarity with the *words* of any composition will frequently cause men to overlook their own imperfect apprehension, or *mis*-apprehension, of the sense. The earlier any one has been taught to repeat forms of words of which he does not understand the meaning, the greater will be the difficulty of subsequent explanation, and the less likely he will be to seek for, or to perceive that he needs, any explanation. If you inquire of some persons what they understand by such and such passages, which they have heard and read many hundred times, and perhaps can readily repeat by rote, you will be surprised,—and perhaps they themselves also, no less,—to find how indistinct and confused are the notions they have formed of the meaning. For, in all matters, *fami-*

liar acquaintance is apt to be mistaken for *accurate knowledge*.

What I have been saying, every minister will be able to confirm from his own experience, who has been in the habit of much personal intercourse with various classes of his people. And *without* such intercourse, he cannot be a competent instructor. Whatever his learning and ability, he will be (as I have above remarked) like a physician undertaking to practise from mere book-knowledge, without having ever visited a sick-chamber. And if he has had intercourse only with certain classes,—if, for instance, he has conversed only with adults of the higher orders, and not with children, and the uneducated,—he will be deficient as an instructor, in reference to these latter. Neither his oral nor his written instructions will be well-suited to them. And (as I observed above) if you should meet with any one who maintains that he himself, or that another, who has had little or nothing of such intercourse with the humbler classes, is qualified either to give lectures, or to write books, well-fitted for

their instruction, you may conclude that (if he really means what his words express) he is altogether an incompetent judge of the subject.

Suggested alterations.

§ 3. As for the questions which have of late excited much and continually increasing interest, respecting a suggested revision of our Prayer-Book, on these I shall not at present enter. You are doubtless well aware how fully and how earnestly, many years ago, both I and my much valued friend, Bishop Dickinson, dwelt on the importance of our being provided with some kind of government for the Church, distinct from that of Parliament; which is, and which is manifestly conscious of being,—unfitted for that office.* What we advocated was, not a mere temporary Commission, expressly and avowedly established for the *remedy of some specific alleged evils*,—which is likely to

* See Charge of 1844. Bishop Dickinson's *Appeal in favour of Church-government*, first published as a pamphlet, is reprinted in the *Remains*. (Fellowes, Ludgate-street.)

be *more alarming* to men's minds, and at the same time must fall short of what is needed,—but, some power that should be competent, in all points, and always, to inquire and to decide (subject, always, to the control of the Civil Legislature)—whether any, and what, regulations or alterations are from time to time needed. This, we remarked, would be likely not only to provide remedies, when wanted, for any actually existing inconveniences, but also to give increased satisfaction and confidence as to a multitude of points wherein *no* change would be proposed; since men would understand that (as is the case in secular matters) whatever was left unaltered was so left, not because there was no power to alter it, but from a deliberate judgment that the alteration would not be desirable.

It was urged, on the other side, and with perfect truth, that there are difficulties and objections in the way of every proposed plan for accomplishing such an object. And this consideration might be accepted as decisive, if there were no objections,—no evils of any kind—on the

opposite side; or if these latter were not still greater, and were not continually on the increase. The difficulties in our way are undoubtedly not only great, but much greater than they were a century and a half ago; and were greater then, than when the illustrious Bacon wrote on the subject; who remarked that to represent continual revision as needful indeed, in secular concerns, but that ecclesiastical matters required none, would be like maintaining that though houses and castles need being repaired from time to time, churches and chapels will stand for ever without repair. And it may be added, that the now existing difficulties, great as they are, are yet short of what *will* present themselves some years hence, when the urgency of the call for encountering them will have increased in a still greater proportion.*

* It is fully expected, that before long the requisite steps will be taken for removing from our Prayer-Book what are called the "State Services."

The only one proposed to be retained, is that for the "Accession." But it would surely be a great improvement, if this (with some slight changes) were transferred

When one of the valleys of Switzerland was transformed, not many years ago, into a vast lake, through the damming up of a river by a glacier, it would have been no wise policy for the neighbouring people below to wait in tranquil security till the barrier should burst of itself. If they had begun earlier than they did, to cut channels through the ice for letting off the water, their work, though not without difficulties and risks, would have been easier and far more effectual. As it was, they did set themselves to the work, though later than was desirable. The barrier did burst before they had completed their task; but the damage done, though very great, was not more than, probably, a fourth part of what *would* have ensued, had they left matters to take their own course.

Those persons are at least consistent,

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from the Accession-day to the *Birthday* of the reigning sovereign. As it is, those who are at all thoughtful have an unpleasant feeling when they assemble to pray for a happy and *long* life to the sovereign, on reflecting that this same Service is one that is hereafter to be used as a solemn thanksgiving for a *national blessing*, on the anniversary of the *death* of that very individual.

however mistaken, who while complaining of certain alleged defects in our Bible Version, or in our Formularies, suggest, whether wisely or unwisely,—some remedial measures: and the same may be said of those who deprecate every change, from a conviction that everything is in a satisfactory state. But those are surely deserving of blame who are always complaining of some supposed faults, while they strenuously oppose every measure by which it is possible that a remedy can be applied. They are inconsistent, and culpably so, in the strictest sense of the word. Any evil or inconvenience to which you not only expect that no remedy *will* be applied, but are resolved that, as far as lies in you, none ever *shall* be applied,—this, you ought to submit to in patient silence, as to an unfavourable season, or an incurable disease, instead of making complaints of which the only tendency is to produce fruitless discontent.

Sometimes, however, we are told that the *present* time is ill-suited for taking such and such steps, because there are *parties* within the Church; as if any reasonable

man could look forward to a time when parties should no longer exist! And I have even seen an argument against any revision of our Authorized Version of Scripture *as yet*, on the ground that all the existing MSS. of the Original have not yet been collated, and that all scholars are not *as yet* agreed as to all the readings to be preferred, and the renderings to be adopted. It argues great simplicity, if not something worse, to profess readiness to adopt a certain course when certain events shall have taken place, which we may be sure will be as far off a century hence as now. Such reasoners—or at least those who listen to them—may remind one of the rustic alluded to by Horace, who stood on a river's brink, waiting till all the water should have flowed by.

But not to detain you longer on matters which I have fully discussed long since, I will only add that a remark above made in reference to the Authorized Version of Scripture, is equally applicable to the Prayer-Book; viz., that whether alterations, greater or less, or none at all, be made in it, there must always be need of

explanations of it, to a large portion at least of our People; and these it must always be an important part of our duty to supply.

Common Prayer.

§ 4. I would suggest, that, as a preliminary to any exposition of particular portions of any of our Services, it will be advisable to offer some remarks on the design and character, generally, of a *Book* of Common Prayer—beginning, as one might say, your explanations with the title-page; for, the very meaning of that title-page is, by some of the least-educated portion of our congregations, not understood; and by some others not sufficiently attended to. You will find, I apprehend, on inquiry, that some of the most untaught and unthinking understand by *Common* Prayer that which is in *ordinary use;* and will need to have it pointed out to them that what is called in the Prayer of Chrysostom "our common supplications," is the *united* supplication of the congregation—that which they *agree* in offering up. Many, however, who are not so ignorant

as to make the mistake now alluded to, will yet be often found not to have sufficiently attended to the full force of the words "Common Prayer," and the high importance of what they denote. They will need to be reminded that the use of a Book of Common Prayer in our own language is one of the characteristics of our Church, distinguishing it, on the one hand, from those churches—of which there are several—in which the prayers are read by the minister in a tongue not understood by the people; and, on the other hand, from all those communities which have no fixed form of prayer at all, but in which the people have to listen to the extemporaneous effusions of their pastor.

These two latter systems, though widely different in some respects, yet agree in this,—that neither of them can carry out, except very imperfectly (if at all), the design of congregational joint-worship; since, in each, the People—at least the far greater part of them—are rather overhearing another man's prayer, than uniting in prayer themselves. In

the Romish, the Armenian, the Coptic, and the Russian Churches, although the learned few—perhaps one in a hundred—may understand the language of the Service, the mass of the congregation will be, as the Apostle Paul expresses it, "Barbarians to him that speaketh, and he that speaketh a barbarian to them."

Extemporaneous Prayers.

§ 5. And in the case of extemporaneous prayer delivered by the minister, it is likely, though understood, not to be *so* understood by the people as to be adopted as *their own address* to the Most High, but rather as an address to themselves by their minister. And, accordingly, it generally is very much of the character of a sermon thrown into the form of a prayer, and more of an exhortation or instruction *to* the congregation, than a petition offered up jointly *by* them. The very novelty which causes them the more easily to keep up their attention without any wanderings of thought (which is the chief difficulty with *us* who use fixed forms)—this very novelty, I say, makes

it next to impossible that they should, more than very partially and imperfectly, so go along with what is spoken as to make it their own at the moment.

When, indeed, a minister who habitually officiates in the same congregation makes a practice of constantly introducing the same topics, nearly in the same order, and in the same words, this amounts in practice to a fixed form of prayer, only recited from memory. The difference is, that it is the composition of the individual pastor, and has not the distinct and deliberate sanction of a Church.

Now, to compose a sermon, and to compose a prayer for congregational use, are not so completely on the same footing that every one who is competent to either, must be equally so to both. For, a sermon may be on the whole edifying, though containing some passages which part of the hearers may not fully assent to, or even some which they may be right in not assenting to. And, at any rate, they are not themselves *parties* to it, or required to adopt it as their own. But

as far as this is the case with a *prayer*, so far it fails of the object of being the joint prayer—the "common supplication"—of the congregation.

Several authors have written in vindication of the *allowableness* of Forms of prayer; adducing the example of the Jewish Church, sanctioned, as it appears to have been, by our Lord, who Himself taught a form to his disciples; and also the practice of the early christian Churches. And, again, many have urged, and with good reason, the great utility of established Forms of prayer in preserving *sound doctrines* that are embodied in those forms, and bringing them habitually before the minds of the People, so as to act as a safeguard against any corruption or any omission, of Gospel-truths. For want of such a safeguard, some religious communities have, it is well known, gradually slid into a religious system the most opposite to what was held by their first founders.*

Many, again, have dwelt on the ex-

* See *Cautions for the Times*, No. 24.

cellence of our own particular Liturgy, and on its superiority to what the far greater part of christian ministers would be likely to pour forth extempore.

All these are topics not unprofitable to be noticed.

Joint Worship.

§ 6. But the point which should be the most prominently put forward and dwelt on, is the solemn promise of our gracious Lord that "where even two or three are gathered together in his Name, He will be in the midst of them." And He plainly teaches us the purport of that promise, as relating not to the mere meeting together in the same building, but to their coming together for joint prayer; "*agreeing together touching something they shall ask* in his Name:" a kind of agreement which can but very imperfectly, if at all, take place, without the use of established and known Forms of Prayer. This consideration you can easily show to be far the most important of all, and in truth decisive of the whole question. And yet

it is remarkable that it has been not seldom overlooked. Among others, the celebrated Scotch Reformer, John Knox, though he was so far from disapproving of Forms of Prayer as not allowable, that he actually drew up one for the use of his own Church, yet left the employment of it optional with each minister. He seems to have designed it as an aid to those ministers who had not what is called the "gift of prayer;" just as our Homilies were drawn up for those not qualified to be preachers. And he might have foreseen that no pastor would be likely to proclaim his own deficiency by resorting to such an aid. The consequence was, of course, the universal adoption of extempore Prayers; which are open to the objection I have adverted to.

The book, however, called the *Directory*, put forward by the Republican Parliament, as designed to supersede the Prayer-Book, leaves everything to the extemporaneous effusions of the minister. It merely gives admonitions as to the general character of the prayers and of

the sermons. Of the book I have alluded to, copies are extremely rare; which is a remarkable circumstance, considering how many thousand copies of it must have been at one time in circulation. But to those who have access to public libraries, it will be worth while to inspect it, in order (among other things) to observe how completely it is sheltered against all that host of objections—whether well or ill-founded—which have been brought, or may be brought, against various passages in our Prayer-Book.*

No cavil can be urged against any prayer in the *Directory*, because it contains none. It merely directs, in general terms, that the prayers (as well as the sermon) shall be intelligible, and scriptural, and pious, and edifying, and so forth; directions which no one can object to, but which can be no *guide* to any one. If a physician were to tell a patient that he ought to take proper medicines, and to use a suitable diet, no one indeed could say that this ought not to be done;

* See *Cautions for the Times*, No. 25.

but the instruction would be as unprofitable as it is unexceptionable.

But if any minister to whom that book had been issued as his guide, delivered prayers that were unsound in doctrine, or unedifying, the blame would be laid on *him*, individually, not on the book; because *that*, it would be urged, had charged him to let his prayers be scriptural and edifying. Of any fault, on the other hand—real or imaginary—that may be found, or fancied, in *our* prayers, the blame is thrown, not on the minister, but on the book itself, and on the church which sanctions it.

And, indeed, a similar kind of unfair advantage to that which I have been describing is enjoyed by the opponents of Christianity; many of whom in the present day have adopted a fashion of professing themselves Christians, while they censure and deride every kind of what they call "book-revelation," and would have each man set up himself as a kind of prophet to himself. When I speak of the similarity of the two cases, I do not, of course, mean to put our Prayer-Book on a level

with Scripture, or to claim for it infallibility. But they agree in being both *books;* and no book ever existed, or can exist, against which objections may not be brought—attacks either in the form of open and deliberate censure, or of half-disguised sneer, such as sometimes appear in popular Journals. As we all know, objections have been urged against the Bible—objections from which those who urged them are completely sheltered by, themselves, referring to no book at all for which any one is to be held responsible except the individual writer.*

We should do well, therefore, to warn our people against being misled by an immunity from immediate and direct censure, which is purchased by the danger of much ultimate evil and by the sacrifice of much utility. They should be reminded (to take an example from secular matters) that we enjoy a great advantage in living under a constitutional government and fixed laws. Not that our constitution professes to be perfect,

* See Note B at the end.

or our laws exempt from all inconveniences, or that we ought not to seek by legitimate means to remedy any imperfections; but that we are incomparably better off than the subjects of despotic monarchies, in which the sovereign, and the officers appointed by him, command, and enact, and decide, in all cases, at their own discretion. Yet these are completely sheltered, by the absence of fixed laws and constitutions, against all such objections as they might allege (sometimes with plausibility) against ours.

Absence of Liturgies in Scripture.

§ 7. I would suggest, in the next place, that it will be advisable to call the attention of your people to the absence of Liturgies, Creeds, and Catechisms in Scripture. Of this subject I have long since treated very fully,* pointing out what a decisive evidence is afforded of the *superhuman* guidance under which the sacred Writers of the New Testament must have lived, from their omission of

* Essay on *The Omission of Creeds*, &c.

what, humanly speaking, it was morally impossible they *should* (all of them) have omitted. And I also called attention to the superhuman *wisdom* shown, in providing, indeed, in Scripture, sufficient instruction in the fundamental *doctrines* of our religion (which are unchangeable), but leaving to each Church the drawing up of such Offices for public worship, such safeguards against particular heresies, and such catechetical instructions, as should be judged best suited to each particular age and country.

But whatever may be any one's private opinion, either as to the merits of our Prayer-Book in particular, or as to the use of *any* prayer-book at all, it is plain that every Minister of a Church which *does* use fixed Forms, is bound, not only to adhere to them, but to put before his People, from time to time, such comments and explanations as may be needed.

Comments.

§ 8. These comments and explanations will fall naturally under two heads:—(1.) In reference to the design and general drift of

each of the several portions of our Services; and (2.) In reference to the meaning of particular passages that may be obscure, or liable to misapprehension, either from the occurrence of obsolete words, or from any other cause.

With respect to the former of these heads, most of you probably have found in the course of your experience, that as children and others of the more ignorant require to be *informed*, so the better-educated classes need to be frequently and earnestly *reminded*, that some of the prayers are appointed to be said by the People along with the Minister, and others by him alone in the name and on behalf of the People; they giving audibly their assent, and signifying their adoption of what is said, by the solemn Amen, or other response appointed. The duty of thus joining and taking the proper part in the public worship, some appear to be utterly ignorant of, while others, who know better, are too often careless and neglectful of it.

And most of you, I fear, will have had the painful and mortifying office of

admonishing many of your People concerning the gross irreverence of habitually absenting themselves from a large portion of the Service, and dropping in, from time to time, in the midst of it; as if the *sermon* were the only matter of any importance. In the Pastoral admonition on this subject, which I circulated not very long since, I expressed a hope and belief that those who are guilty of this fault are not guilty of it through a wilful and *designed* irreverence towards the Most High, and would not wish to hold up our religion to the scorn of our Roman Catholic and other dissenting countrymen, but act as they do from mere thoughtlessness. But you should assiduously and earnestly press on their attention that in such a case as this, careless thoughtlessness amounts to a sin of no small magnitude.

On this subject, however, I need not now enlarge further, as the Tract just alluded to is in your hands.

Creeds.

§ 9. Among the portions of our Services of which the de-

sign and general purport may need some explanation or remark, I will particularize the Creeds. That a Creed is something of a totally different character from a Prayer, some persons who have not had much of the requisite experience, might think it superfluous even to mention to any one; and they might be surprised, and almost incredulous, on being told that not only by Roman Catholics, but by many of the ignorant among Protestants, it is a practice to recite the Apostles' Creed even as a part of their private devotions.

But among those who are far better taught than to confound a profession of faith in certain doctrines with an address to the Almighty, you will find not a few who suppose a Creed to be designed as a summary of all the most essential points of christian Faith. And this misapprehension is the more needful to be guarded against, because it does appear that the framers of our Services—at least of the Baptismal Service, and the Catechism—must have regarded the Apostles' Creed as a compendium of necessary christian

doctrine. And this mistake has been fostered by the writings of some very well-known Divines of much learning and ingenuity, but who have taken altogether a wrong view of the subject.*

The fact probably is that they had in their own minds so strong an association of our Lord's *Sonship* with his *Divine Nature*, and of his *death*, with his *atonement*, that it never occurred to them to examine carefully whether these doctrines were distinctly stated, or clearly implied, in the Creed: a Creed which may be, and I believe is, adopted by Socinians. These, moreover, are likely to argue from the omission of any such doctrine in the earliest Creed, that it was not held in the Primitive Church. And the argument admits of no answer, from those who consider a Creed as a summary of all essential doctrines. It is of vital importance, therefore, to explain to our People that this is quite an erroneous view; that the object of a Creed is, not to instruct men

* See WHEATLEY, ch. iii. § 14. See also *Cautions for the Times*, No. 25.

in all points of Gospel truth, but to guard against the heresies most prevalent in each age and country. Creeds, therefore, correspond not to the houses we build as our dwelling-places, but rather to the sea-walls which are erected to protect this or that part of the coast from the encroachments of the ocean. And according to this view (which you may easily show to be undoubtedly the correct one) the omission of certain doctrines in the earliest Creed, goes to prove, not that they were not *held*, but that they had then *never been doubted*. The heresies of the first Ages were of quite a different character. The point *then* needing to be insisted on was not the *divine* nature, but the *human* nature of the Lord Jesus; not the atoning character of his sacrifice, but the *reality of his death*. For this, as you are doubtless well aware, was denied by those early heretics called Docetæ; whose strange theory is still maintained by above eighty millions of persons, who acknowledge Jesus to have been the true Messiah: the Mahometans, who have it as a tradition.

It will be desirable, again, to point out to your People that the Creeds have, according to our Church, no *independent* authority, nor any claim to reception derived from General Councils, or Tradition, but rest only on their conformity to Scripture; as our Reformers have been careful to set forth in the Article on Creeds.

Communion Service.

§ 10. With respect to the Communion Service, most of you probably will have before now found it needful to explain to your People the design and general drift of the *exhortation*. *That* has often been so understood as to deter altogether many persons from attending at the Lord's Table, under the idea that if they are conscious of sinfulness they would be "eating and drinking damnation to themselves" as unworthy partakers. It is not difficult, and it is highly important, to explain that the unworthiness which the Apostle and which our Reformers had in view, was that careless irreverence of which, in the present day, there is little

or no danger: the prevailing fault among *us* being the lamentable *neglect* of the holy ordinance. Certainly any stranger coming among us from some distant land, when he saw the multitudes pouring out of our Churches, when the celebration of the Lord's Supper is about to commence—a multitude whose coming to the Church at all proves that they are not unbelievers, nor totally careless of religious duties—would not fail to conclude that Christianity is not one religion, but two distinct ones; that for communicants, and that for non-communicants. And if he were then assured that all these persons agreed in acknowledging as their divine Master and Redeemer Him whose last injunction, confessedly extending to all his followers, they deliberately and habitually disregarded, he would be almost disposed to disbelieve this assurance as incredible.

It would be foreign from my present purpose to say more on this painful subject, especially as I have so lately treated fully of it. I will only add that I trust you will persevere (not disheartened by any failures) in your efforts to remove,

or at least lessen, this grievous scandal to our Church, and which is at the same time so perilous to the souls of its members. With a view to this object, one most advantageous occasion is afforded in the preparation of candidates for Confirmation: an occasion of which I believe most of you have often availed yourselves, and with good effect.*

There are in the Communion Service some passages on which, though they are not at all obscure, it will be desirable to make a remark, in order to call the atten-

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* The number of candidates confirmed this summer was 1878. This opportunity is the more advantageous, from the practice I have always adopted, of administering the Lord's Supper immediately after the Confirmation and as a part of the Service. This tends (besides other advantages) to guard against the notion of Confirmation's being a distinct *Sacrament*, or of any one's being fit for the one Rite, and not for the other. And as I have always taught that the persons confirmed ought to receive the Communion on the *earliest possible* opportunity, so, I feel bound in consistency to set them the example of adhering to the like rule. If *they* are bound to *receive* it on the earliest opportunity, *we* are bound to *administer* it on the earliest possible opportunity.

And it is very satisfactory to observe how many of the rest of the congregation come forward on these occasions, to attend, some of them for the first time, at the Lord's Table.

tion of your People to the general design of our Reformers in the words they have employed: I mean the passages in which they have introduced the word "*Sacrifice.*" They were anxious to guard against the doctrine taught in the unreformed Church, of what is called "the Sacrifice of the Mass:" the doctrine that the literal material body of the Lord Jesus is actually offered up by the Priest when he celebrates the Eucharist; and that accordingly there is daily made, in thousands of places, that sacrifice which Scripture distinctly assures us was made "once for all," and whose efficacy is there set forth expressly on the very ground of its not needing to be (like the typical sacrifices under the law) repeated again and again. To guard against this doctrine, and also, it would seem, against that other notion which some adopted, of the Eucharist being a sacrifice of bread and wine offered up to God, our Reformers not only advert (in the Consecration Prayer) to the "one oblation of Christ once offered by Himself," but also introduce the word, in a different and figurative sense, in the Of-

fertory, and again twice in one of the concluding prayers; speaking of the sacrifice of our *alms* ("with which God is well pleased")—the sacrifice of our *prayers*, and the offering up of "our*selves* to be a rational, holy, and living sacrifice." It was not thought enough to abstain from all mention of any such thing as the Sacrifice of the Mass; but every other and true sense in which the word sacrifice could be rightly employed is resorted to, in order to exclude the more effectually the wrong acceptation of it.

I mention this instance as a specimen of those passages on which it may be useful to comment, though no explanation of any difficulty is called for.

"Mysteries" and "Testament."

§ 11. There is a passage in one of the Post-Communion prayers which does, to many readers, need some explanation. I mean that in which the word "Mysteries" occurs. It is a word so commonly employed in the present day to signify "something that cannot be understood," that it will be useful to point out its

meaning in this passage, as equivalent to "symbol" or "emblem;" the "holy mysteries" which the communicants are described as having "duly received" being the bread and wine, considered as symbolically *representing* the body and blood of our Saviour; even as the Apostle Paul speaks of *marriage* as a "mystery" ("sacramentum" in the Vulgate) when considered as an emblem representing the union of Christ and his Church. In like manner we read, in the same prayer, of the "mystical" [*i.e.*, figurative] body of Christ; which is the blessed company of all faithful [believing] people: and in the Baptismal Service, of the water employed for the "mystical" [*i.e.*, figurative or emblematical] "washing away of sin."

Still more important is it (as I have already observed) to explain that the word "*Testament*" which occurs in the Consecration prayer, is to be understood as signifying "Covenant" or "Dispensation." The use of the word "Testament" is the more to be regretted, because it affects the very title itself by which

the Sacred Volume is known among us. And it renders totally unintelligible that most important passage in the Epistle to the Hebrews which goes to establish so clearly the *sacrificial* character of our Lord's death.*

Obsolete words.

§ 12. There can be no need to detain you by entering on any enumeration of the words and phrases that will call for comment or elucidation from you. Attentive perusal with that view, and your catechetical instruction of the young, and conversation with various classes of your parishioners, will bring those expressions under your

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* I remarked to a learned and ingenious friend, who seemed disposed to maintain the Authorized Version at all hazards, that the whole passage, as it stands, conveys to me not merely no satisfactory sense, but no intelligible sense whatever; and that the more I examine it, the more hopelessly perplexing does it appear. And I suggested to him to consult (as I had done long since) the many learned and intelligent friends, and ample libraries, to which I knew he had ready access. As this was many months ago, I cannot doubt that if any even tolerably satisfactory interpretation could have been found, I should have heard of it before now.

See Rev. Mr. Macdonnell's valuable Lectures *On the Atonement.*

notice; and I cannot suppose you will be at any loss to give such explanations as are needed.

In reference to passages which have become somewhat obscure, or liable to be mistaken through the changes in our language, you will doubtless have observed, both in our Version of the Bible, and in the Prayer-Book, that the words which have wholly gone out of common use are very few compared with those which, though as much used as ever, have been greatly modified in their signification. The word "reasonable" *e.g.* is in common use now, but not in the sense of "rational" [*i.e.*, possessed of reason], which is what it bore at the time when our Authorized Version and Prayer-Book were composed. The like may be said of the word "lively," which, as you are aware, formerly signified "living." And both these words occur in their ancient sense in one of the Post-Communion Prayers.

The words "prevent" and "let," again, have almost reversed the signification in which we sometimes find them in the older writings, though they are quite as

much in use as ever. And the word "incomprehensible" is not unfrequent in modern use, though in a sense utterly remote from what it bears in the Athanasian Creed, as equivalent to the Latin original "immensus," "*not bounded by space.*" You may meet with not a few among what are considered the educated classes, who accordingly misunderstand the word, and in consequence the whole passage where it occurs.

And universally those words must evidently be the most likely to mislead which are not totally obsolete, but obsolete in their ancient sense, though commonly used by us in a different sense. The wholly obsolete words are likely to convey *no* meaning at all, and the others to convey a *wrong* meaning. To take one instance out of a multitude: I have known the writer of a book find fault with a passage in our 21st Article, which lays it down that doctrines or decisions of a Council are not to be received as of authority, "unless it may be *declared* that they be taken out of Holy Scripture." This, he says, affords us no sufficient

security, unless the question be satisfactorily answered "declared by whom?" He evidently understands the word "declare" in its modern sense. But any one who consults the Latin Original will see that it is the translation of "*ostendi*," and that it is employed in its ancient meaning, which was to "*make clear*," to "prove."

On the ambiguity of the word "*Hell*," which is a translation of two quite different words in Greek, I have above offered some remarks. Many like instances will readily occur to you; such as "faithful" for "believing;" "*wealth*," in the sense of "prosperity;" "*estate*," for "external circumstances;" "*convenient*," for "proper and becoming;" "*after*," for "according to;" "passion," for "suffering;" "offend," and "tempt," in a sense considerably different from what they now convey; and several others.

Explanatory Teaching the least admired.

§ 13. Such expositions as I have been recommending, you will find it advisable to give not merely in discourses from the pulpit, but also in private

conversation, and especially in instruction of catechetical classes.* This last branch of our duty is one which no rightly conscientious pastor will be content to hand over altogether to a parish schoolmaster, or to such chance-assistants as may offer themselves; however competent these may be to teach children to *read* correctly the words of the Bible and the Prayer-Book.

I cannot conclude, however, without again warning you that that branch of our duty which I have now been treating of, is one which you must not expect to find the most striking in its immediate results, or which will be, to a considerable portion of your congregations, the most interesting, or the most productive of admiration. It is for that very reason that it is the more needful, for me, and for you, to take every precaution against the temptations to neglect what is clearly a part, and a very important part, of our duty.

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* A very useful course of lectures on this subject was lately delivered by one of my clergy, who I hope will be induced to publish the substance of them.

And such instruction as I have been recommending, will, if diligently and skilfully conducted, produce effects, gradual indeed, and somewhat slow, but deep-rooted and of lasting benefit.

If you find that your sermons are very attractive to that portion especially of your congregations who care for little *except* the sermon—who seldom or never approach the Lord's Table, and who are negligent in all that relates to public *worship*, this should operate on you rather as a warning than as a source of self-gratulation. If, on the contrary, you find your people more and more careful not to absent themselves from the early portion of divine Service—more and more attentive and earnestly devout in their demeanour, and apparently impressed deeply with a sense of the high privilege they enjoy in our Lord's gracious promise of his own especial presence in the midst of those "assembled in his name," and "agreeing together touching something they shall ask;" and if you find an increased and increasing number of habitual attendants at the Lord's Supper, then, indeed, you may

confidently hope that the Lord's blessing has been bestowed on your exertions—that you have been in some degree successful as feeders of his beloved flock which He has committed to your care; and that when He, the Chief Shepherd, shall appear, you will have a joyful meeting in his presence with many whom you will have brought, or will have kept, within his Fold.

NOTES.

NOTE A, page 56.

THESE words are taken from an able writer in the *Cautions for the Times*, No. 24. The whole passage is here subjoined:—

"In thus insisting on the claims of the appointed "teachers of the Church, we may possibly have appeared "to some of you unduly to exalt the christian ministry, "and to approach too near the Romish notions of the "dignity of the priesthood. But you will perceive, on "reflection, that the very reverse is the case. Many of "those who pay less deference than we think they ought, "to the teaching of Church-officers, do in reality ap-"proach, far more than we do, to the Romish notions as "to the functions of these officers. For there are some "who, while they think themselves quite justified in "chusing their *teachers* as they please, would consider "it wrong that the public Prayers of the Church should "be conducted by any but regularly ordained clergymen; "or who, at any rate, would be shocked to receive the "Sacraments from any other. Now, does not this feel-"ing imply a persuasion that it is not teaching, but "officiating before God, which forms the distinguishing "function of the christian Ministry? In the case, in-"deed, of *heathen* priests, it is true that the offering of "sacrifices was *their* sole duty, and that the giving of "instruction was no part of their office. And so like-"wise in the case of the Jewish priests; their peculiar "office was the making atonement for the sins of the

"People; while Jews of any tribe were freely admitted "to expound the Scripture in the Synagogues. (See "Luke iv., and Acts xiii.) You are aware, also, that in "the Romish Church similar views are entertained as to "the priestly office, and that what constitutes with them "the distinguishing function of the priest is the power "of consecrating the Eucharist, and thereby, as they be- "lieve, offering up sacrifice for the living and the dead. "But it is very remarkable, that in the Bible the word "*Hiereus* (or sacrificing priest, in Latin, "sacerdos") is "applied to no officer of the Christian Church, but is re- "served for our Lord exclusively. The sacrifice offered "on Calvary is expressly declared to be final, and one "which needs not to be followed by any other atonement; "and the duties ascribed to the Christian ministers are "not the making atonement for the sins of the People, "but the proclaiming the Gospel-Message, and the setting "forth of its doctrines. If then we meet with a person "who behaves as if he thought that all had equal "authority for public teaching, while he acknowledges "that all have not equal authority to minister in the "public ordinances of the Church, is he not unconsciously "entertaining views regarding the Christian Ministry "more nearly resembling those which the heathens and "the Jews held, and which the Romanists still hold, with "regard to their priests, than any which can be fairly "collected from the New Testament?—that he must con- "sider the priest as one who is to do something with God "on his behalf, or in his stead, rather than as one whose "principal office is the communicating instruction to the "People?"

NOTE B, page 75.

The same observations will apply to the case of *subscription* to any Formulary, whether a Liturgy, or a "Creed," "Articles of Religion," or "Confession of Faith." Those belonging to some Communion which uses nothing

of the kind,—that is, nothing *formally agreed on*, written down, and *published*,—sometimes make it a matter of boast that they have no test of orthodoxy framed by Man, but refer only to the Holy Scriptures. They do, however, in some way, ascertain the soundness, according to their own views, of each Man's interpretation of Scripture; so that the only difference between them and us is, that they trust *everything* to the discretion of those who act as examiners—the TRYERS, as they were called in the times of the Commonwealth.

Yet they may allege objections, to an indefinite extent, against any written Formularies; safe from having any precisely similar objections retorted; because the blame of anything that may be open to blame is laid on *individuals*, and not on the Church which leaves to those individuals an unlimited, and perhaps unsafe, discretion.

There is, however (as was observed in the *Cautions for the Times*, No. 26), "no Christian community which "does not, in some way or other, apply some other test "besides the very words of Scripture. Some Churches, "indeed, do not reduce any such Test to writing, or express it in any *fixed* form, so as to enable every one to "know beforehand precisely how much he will be required to bind himself to. But nevertheless, those "churches do apply a test, and very often a much more "stringent, elaborate, and minute test, than our Liturgy "and Articles. In such Communities, the candidate-"pastor of a Congregation is not, to be sure, called on to "subscribe in writing a definite Confession of Faith, "drawn up by learned and pious persons after mature "deliberation, and publicly set forth by common authority. "But he is called upon to converse with the leading "members of the Congregation, and satisfy them as to "the soundness of his views; not, of course, by merely "repeating texts of Scripture,—which a man of any "views might do, and do honestly;—but by explaining "*the sense* in which he understands the Scriptures. "Thus, instead of subscribing the Thirty-nine Articles,

"he subscribes the sentiments of the leading members—
"for the time being—of that particular congregation
"over which He is to be placed as Teacher.

"And thus it is that Tests of some kind or other,
"written or unwritten, [*i.e.*, transmitted by oral tradi-
"tion], fixed for the whole Body, or variable, according to
"the discretion of particular Governors, are, and must be,
"used in every Christian Church."

THE END.

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